

number. All these conditions are the more trying because of the beautiful and tender relations which may exist between patient and nurse if only the right spirit inspires both to noble deeds and gracious forbearance. It is comforting to think that these relationships do exist as largely as they do. And it is to be hoped that as brotherly love continues, with the desire to give and to share, these unpleasant phases, which every nurse with a large clientele must have experienced, will pass away.

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## **A NEW CRANFORD: BEING A MORE OR LESS TRUE ACCOUNT OF AN EXPERIMENT**

**DEDICATED TO OUR DEAR J. B., WHO OF ALL OTHERS BEST  
UNDERSTANDS WHAT PROMPTED ITS UNDERTAKING**

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### **IV. SOME EXPERIENCES WITH HENS, INCUBATORS, AND OTHER THINGS**

WHEN we made our first plans about Cranford Euphemia was filled with enthusiasm about chickens and began a violent course of reading about poultry. The papers she had seemed to me to be printed on poor paper and filled with advertisements for incubators, patent poultry food, washing machines, and diamonds at a dollar a month, illustrated with stout ladies in their Sunday clothes doing the family wash and stouter ladies with much pompadour setting off the diamonds, while the hens were all as big as ostriches, as the combined results of incubators and patent food.

I called Euphemia's attention to these points, but it did not dampen her ardor, and her enthusiasm waxed stronger while she learned to fling incubators and bone-grinding machines into her parts of speech with that same glibness with which a medical student adorns his conversation with minute anatomy.

Later she suddenly realized that poultry to be profitable must be killed and sold, which had not occurred to her at first and which put her into a serious dilemma, for since her earliest days she has been a regular Hindu about animals; no beast was ever ugly enough in looks or manners to alienate her affections, and to sell or kill would spoil her life. After much serious reflection she decided to name them after all

the tiresome, disagreeable people she knew or could hear of, hoping such vicarious revenge might give her some comfort. With one or two kindred spirits to help her in supplying names she will probably become a hardened poultry dealer in time, but it will take time; at present she weeps over every poor chick who is getting himself put into a market crate, because they are so tame they will let her pick them up and have no idea of being afraid of anything, which she says is "a cruel, wicked breach of confidence."

The first to be killed was "Mr. A.," a poor rooster with a broken leg. He was named for a man whose nationality, selfishness, and ill-temper had long been a sore trial to her. The next to go was named for "Mrs. Z.," who has all the virtues and not a redeeming vice, whose visits were so frequent and uninteresting that every member of the family who could escape flew to remote corners to come out only when the danger had passed. The next was a namesake of "Dr. X.," whose economy of truth is frequent and vicious, and so audacious that one is awed by his daring. This feast was attended by a few of the elect, and our dear lady declared that, true to the original of the name, he disagreed with her a whole day. Like the Lord High Executioner, they have "many on the list" whose turn will come in due time.

An incubator is a wonderful contrivance, nearly as ornamental as a piano, with an oil lamp for heat and a thermometer inside which you look at through a window and see if the temperature is having chills or fever. The temperature is regulated by a thermostat which works with marvellous precision. I, being only a humble probationer, am allowed to hold the candle while Euphemia peers in to see if all's well; later I may learn to officiate too.

The eggs are laid in shallow, wire-bottomed trays like ash sifters, and every morning these are taken out and the eggs turned, a ceremony a hen mother performs daily it is said.

Euphemia's first chickens were posted to arrive on Easter, and by all the traditions of ages as well as the result of her indefatigable labors they should have come in large blocks, as she had over two hundred eggs in the incubator, and had not only spent all of her money but most of her sleep o' nights peering into that piano-box contrivance with a candle, but, like other eggs, other incubators, and other enthusiasts, the occasion was deeply melancholic. Only twenty-one of two hundred eggs hatched, and three of these were so wobbly in the legs they died.

A fourth chick had such a wonderful experience at her hands that his case should be written up for the medical journals as of more than passing scientific interest. When the chicks were a week old the third wobble-legs laid down and died, together with this fourth, who appar-

ently had nothing the matter with him. The sight of them stretched out upon the floor filled Euphemia with such consuming rage at the tricks of Fate that she opened the hen-house window and cast them down the side of the bluff, with an incantation more forceful than elegant. An hour later, upon going down the hill, she met the fourth supposed-to-be-dead chick returning as chipper as possible, and from that day he waxed fat.

Another heart-breaking circumstance was that when it was too late Euphemia discovered over fifty of the unbroken eggs had plump little chickens in them which only needed a little friendly assistance to help them out. The only comfort she found in life at that particular moment was from a message from Dr. H., who sent word that from his first "hatch" there were only four eggs which contained anything, and they were dead ducks. Verily, misery does love company.

We have two cows, Dinah and Nancy. Dinah is a little Jersey, as trim and pretty a little beastie as one could wish to see. Like all of our beasts and birds, she is spoiled, however, and is very wilful and obstreperous when it pleases her, giving Tom a great many hard "bunts," as he calls it, and if by chance you meet her, you, forsooth, must turn out, for she will not, but she is very intelligent and affectionate, while Nancy is what Euphemia calls "just cow," with untidy ways, stupid, and a bad disposition, a sort of slatternly shrew.

One of our experiences with the cows is a striking example of the difference between precept and practice.

Certainly it would seem that any nurse would know better after her training than to give sour apples in large quantities to nursing mothers, but I assure you they do not all put into practice what they have been taught.

In August we had very dry weather and the pasture was thin and poor; at the same time we had a large number of early apples which were not marketable, and we conceived the brilliant idea of giving them to the cows; so day after day for three weeks or more Tom laboriously gathered them up and Dinah and Nancy, who should have known better if we did not, ate bushels and bushels of them; meanwhile the milk grew less and less, extra fodder was fed and extra water given them, until upon a certain day it suddenly dawned upon us that sour apples would not tend to make milk, and we stopped them, while Euphemia consulted our colored neighbor, who said, "Foh de Lord, Miss Phemie, I wondah you didn't kill em." Later another neighbor lost his best cow, which jumped over the orchard fence and ate so many apples she died, which made us think that a special Providence watches over the feeble-minded.

(To be continued.)